



**A Welcome
from
the President of Iceland
Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson,
Patron of the EABCT Congress**

Iceland has for years been privileged to serve as the location for many distinguished international conferences. The creative forces of nature on display in our country have provided the inspiration for innovative dialogue and constructive discussions.

It has fallen on the European Association of Behavioural and Cognitive Therapies to usher in a new era for Iceland, as the congress will take place in our new concert hall beside the harbour, with its extensive views of the Atlantic Ocean and the colourful mountains; a landmark building wrapped in a unique glass and steel artwork by our world-famous countryman Ólafur Elíasson. Some have said that what you see is outstanding contemporary art which happens to contain a concert hall.

For the people of Iceland, your congress is especially welcome, as we have in recent years become increasingly concerned by the prevalence of mood-related disorders among the adolescents in our population.

We know that on a global scale it is now estimated that the costs and disabilities associated with depression will surpass those of cardiovascular and heart disease by the year 2020 when mood disorders are projected to become the most debilitating human problem; anxiety and behavioural difficulties are also of great social and personal significance.

Furthermore, the recent economic and financial crisis has exacerbated the negative impact of psychological disorders in many European societies and will unfortunately in all likelihood continue to do so for years to come.

It is thus both timely and significant that we turn our attention towards methods of prevention, which will be the predominant theme of

the EABCT 2011 Congress. It is a significant area of research which hopefully will enhance people's coping skills, help to offset the effects of psychological disorders and reduce the negative impact of the current economic climate on our societies.

We in Iceland are honoured to be able to contribute to the success of your deliberations. It is my sincere hope that our country will prove to be a stimulating location that will help the 2011 Congress reach constructive conclusions

(undirskrift forseta)